4: Krämer--108 (1909) 1937 Woleaians
116, 846, 853 Lamotrek

The navel is underbound, gogoi budj. The child is nursed right away and soon is given palm juice, coconut milk, etc.; after about three or four months it is fed fish and taro. Sometimes infants are nursed until they are three years old. The afterbirth, pai, is buried, and the woman goes bathing in the sea. Some resort is taken to exercises, jüjü, in order that the women may become thinner.

28: Spiro--85 [3] (1947-48) 1949 Woleaians
116, 846, 853 Ifalik

"For its first four days the infant is fed water and coconut oil, and whatever milk the mother may have. The infant is fed whenever it cries and when the mother and her attendant think it proper. That is, if the infant should sleep for an extended period, the mother will wake it in order to feed it.

On the fifth day, the mother's milk is usually sufficient, and the breast replaces the coconut oil. But the feeding follows the same pattern--in which first water is given the infant, and then the breast. Again, it is fed whenever it cries, and whenever its mother sees that its stomach is flat or not swollen. If the stomach is swollen, it is assumed that it is not hungry."

28: Spiro--87-88 (1947-48) 1949 Woleaians
116, 853, 862, 826 Ifalik

"Feeding at home is, at first, like the feeding in the birth-hut, the nourishment consisting of the breast-milk and water, the latter always preceeding the former. But the water is more than water; it is 'medicine' as well. That is the water-feeder is a sack-like piece of coconut bark, in which is wrapped the leaves of the angorik, and is called walewa. The walewa is immersed in a coconut shell containing water, and when the mother feeds water to the infant she squeezes the walewa which has absorbed the water, so that the water streams into the infant's mouth. This practice often is disturbing to the baby, because the flow of water cannot be readily controlled, and I have seen many babies gagging on an overflow. Besides, if the infant is genuinely thirsty, he is frustrated by his own inability to swallow the water as rapidly as its streams into his mouth, so that he gasps and gurgles and chokes while trying to swallow. [88]

As is the practice in the birth-hut, the infant is fed whenever it cries, or whenever it turns.

The breast, then, serves not only as a source of nourishment, but as a pacifier as well. That the breast assumes the function of pacifier is indicated by the almost reflexive turn of the child to the mother's breast in time of distress. When I first made my appearance on the island, and the babies were still frightened of me, many would either clutch at the breast, or else place it in their mouths."

28: Spiro--88 (1947-48) 1949 Woleaians-1-2
116, 853, 157, 862 Ifalik

"It has been claimed by many observers that in cultures in which there is no oral frustration, in which the breast is always available, that children will not suck their thumbs. The great majority of children on Ifaluk are thumb suckers, not only those who have been weaned, but those who are still being suckled. Some mothers discourage thumb-sucking, while others are unconcerned about it. Those opposed to the practice say that it weakens the thumb and kills the child's appetite.

Thumb sucking, then, is not only a function of oral frustration. It may be a simple satisfaction of the sucking reflex. Or, in older children, it may be a regression to the oral level of mastery. This would be particularly true on Ifaluk, in which the older child is, relatively speaking, neglected, so that the thumb sucking is a return to the security and emotional gratification of the nursing infant.

When the mother feeds her baby, she lifts it from its bed or cradle, returning it to its place, when she is finished. Always care is taken to support the infant's head, so that it does not fall back. At first the stiff cloth is used which prevents the head from falling. Later the cloth is discarded, but the mother supports the head with her hand. This support continues whenever the baby is held, until it begins to crawl. Again, I learned this the hard way, by violation of the practice, and being taught the correct way by the father of the infant I had 'maltreated'.

(1947-48) 1949

Only the mother may feed the baby during its first three months. If she should die, a wet nurse will be found, but not if her milk is scarce. In the latter case, coconut juice will be added to the diet."

28: Spiro--88 [2] (1947-48) 1949 Woleaians
116, 853, 824 Ifalik

"Besides water and milk, the infant is fed some special medicine twice a day--morning and night--for the first three months. This medicine is a concoction of water in which are mixed the leaves of the ragnz, galua, and karavwan trees. This medicine is given to make the baby's 'stomach very fine.'"

28: Spiro--88 [3]
116, 853, 183

(1947-48) 1949

Woleaians
Ifalik

"My informants said that unlike the ten days in the birth-hut, the baby is not wakened to be fed. My own observations, however, did not confirm this statement, which was probably a statement of a cultural norm, rather than an empirical description. For at least the first month, the mother will feed the infant often, and will wake it in order to do so. The baby is wakened by the stream of water in its mouth. Often, however, this does not wake the baby, and the mother will ease her nipple into its mouth, which automatically induces the sucking reflex, though to all appearances, the baby is still sleeping."

28: Spiro--89 [2] (1947-48) 1949 Woleaians
116, 853, 862, 262 Ifalik

"In its third month, the infant's diet is increased, and in a sense, this is the beginning of its weaning, though the natives do not view it as such. The mother begins to give the infant taro and fish, which she first masticates and then introduces it into the infant's mouth with her fingers. At this time, also, the infant is introduced to the palm-toddy. Only the fresh toddy that had just been collected is given to the infant, and even it is first diluted with water before it is given to the baby. If the infant does not like the solid food, it is not forced to take it, but its mother will continue to offer it these foods at frequent intervals, until it gets to like them."